

12

the KUROSAKI **corpse** delivery service

黒鷲**死体**宅配便

eiji otsuka 大塚英志 housui yamazaki 山崎峰水

STAFF A



Psychic

【イタコ】：死体との対話

STAFF B



Dowsing

【ダウジング】：死体の捜索

STAFF C



Hacking

【ハッキング】：情報の収集



YOUR BODY IS THEIR BUSINESS!



黒鷲死体宅配便

the KUROSAKI corpse delivery service

12

story

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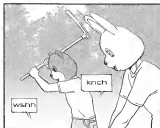
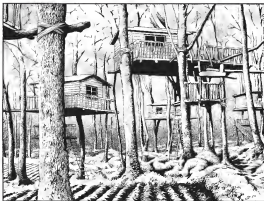


contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1st delivery: picnic boogie | 5 |
| 2nd delivery: ariennu republic | 29 |
| 3rd delivery: shadow show | 51 |
| 4th delivery: i'm sittin' on the edge of skies | 75 |
| 5th delivery: a single bound to the moat | 101 |
| 6th delivery: in deep hurt | 125 |
| 7th delivery: to the land of ink paintings | 153 |
| 8th delivery: time machine | 179 |
| disjecta membra: glossary and notes | 206 |









Ran up some bills
at a gentlemen's
club, and next
thing you know...I'm
doing the hoeing!



That so? I sailed
here on the same
rubber boat, pal!



Hey,
Mr. Bunny.
Been here
long?

Nah, just
arrived.



damn
nigg

Now, what
are you
boys talking
about...?



I'm s-
sorry, I
just...

You know we
don't discuss a
person's past,
Mr. Panda

Everyone has
their own reasons
for coming here...



1st delivery

ピクニック・ブギ

picnic boogie



















BUT HER DELUSION DIDN'T GET ANY BETTER. IN FACT, IT ONLY KEPT GROWING... UNTIL SHE WAS CONVINCED THE ORGANIZATION HAD ALSO REPLACED THE POLICE...THE HOSPITAL STAFF... AND EVENTUALLY, THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF PARIS...

A WOMAN CLAIMED THAT WROSTORS HAD REPLACED HER HUSBAND AND CHILD, AND THAT THE REAL ONES WERE BEING HELD CAPTIVE BY AN EVIL ORGANIZATION. SHE REPORTED IT TO THE POLICE, BUT AS THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE FOR HER CLAIMS, SHE WAS PLACED IN A MENTAL HOSPITAL.



FROM THE
ENDING OF THAT
WAS GREAT!
CHECK OUT MY
DONALD SUTHER
LAND IMPRES-
SION!

please
help!

WHOA! IT'S LIKE
THAT MOVIE WHERE
THE ALIENS
REPLACE ALL YOUR
FRIENDS AND
FAMILY MEMBERS!

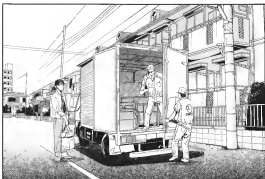


...



**SOMEONE
REALLY HAS
REPLACED
MR. KAWAI!**

**I'M
NOT
CRAZY!**







IT'S
JUST...
IT'S JUST
THAT I...



I DON'T
OWE YOU
ANYTHING
MORE, DO
I...?

I'VE GOT
ENOUGH TO MOVE,
SO I WANT TO
START A NEW
LIFE. YOU GOT A
PROBLEM WITH
THAT, OR ARE YOU
GOING TO KEEP
STALKING ME?



THEN LEAVE
ME ALONE.



HE IS AN
IMPOSTOR!
THERE'S NO
WAY THE REAL
MR. KAWA
WOULD HAVE
THROWN THIS
AWAY!







slap

slap

slap

You're so
great, Mr.
Bunny!

slap

Yes,
grab it...



...just like
a rabbit



...!!!



WHAT DO
YOU MEAN,
EXACTLY...?

Ah

Ah

Ahhh













YOU'RE
GOING
THERE
NOW
...?'

2nd delivery
アリエヌ共和国
arienu republic



NO, YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND.
JUGA/HARA
VILLAGE ISN'T
REALLY IN THE
SEA OF TREES.
IT'S INSIDE—



SHOULDN'T
YOU WAIT
'TILL
TOMORROW?
IT'S ALMOST
DARK...









She runs this place. That's her room up there, but...

ahh

ahh



What should we do? Do we go inform the mistress?

Who?



Excuse me... Is there a Mr. Kawai here?

chek



Yes, but she's busy right now, so...

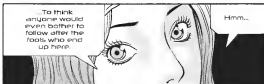
Up there?

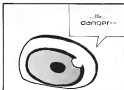


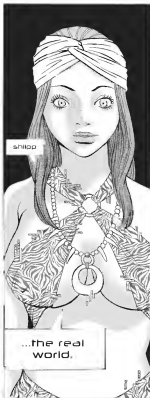
Hau... wait!

Oh, mistress...











...LOOKS
LIKE SHE'S
OUT.



HEY, THE
DOOR IS
UNLOCKED...

WHAT?



MAYBE
SHE'S STILL
ON THE
ROAD FROM
JUKAIYAWA?

MAYBE...
BUT WHY
ISN'T SHE
ANSWERING
HER
PHONE...?





MAYBE
SHE
NEVER
GOT
THERE...?

IS IT? SHE COULD
HAVE STOMPED
AROUND AND
OVERTURNED
THINGS AND STILL
THOUGHT IT WAS
HER "THINGS."
SHE SAID SHE
LEFT FOR THAT
VILLAGE...



I DON'T
KNOW...

WHAT'D
YOU
FIND?



SSURL
Jukai yama
283/109/215

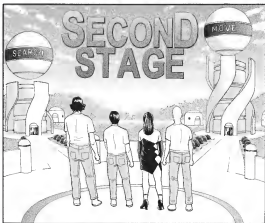
...BUT
THERE'S ONLY
ONE WORD ON
HERE THAT
MAKES ANY
SENSE.











Well, jeans and a T-shirt
are the starting gear for
a new male avatar in
Second Stage without
accomplishments
or cash.



Now if you want
something with style,
you either need the
talent to design it...or
the money to buy it
from those who do.

Wow! It's like me,
only with a... did
you give me a
manicure...?



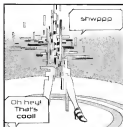
You made
an avatar
for Kereels,
too...?

I guess
my first
question
is...



...why are we
dressed this
way...?

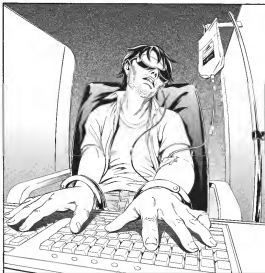


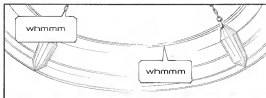












3rd delivery
影絵小屋
shadow show

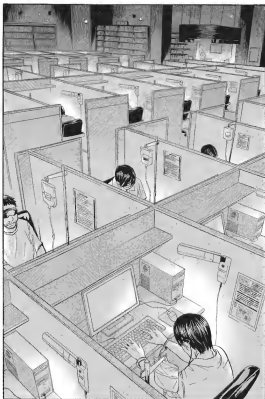




















...M-
MR.
KAWAI
...!



OF
COURSE
MOST END
UP LIKE
HIM...

Fujisawa



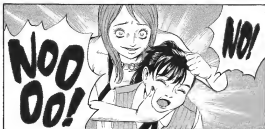
N-NO,
I JUST
WANTED
TO...

WHY SO
UPSET? HE
MUST HAVE
EMBARRASSED
YOU, TOO. A
LOSER LIKE
THAT, HOOKED
ON SOAPLANDS
AND STRIP
CLUBS...



OH-HO-HO-HO!
DID YOU EVER
TRY TO KEEP A
PET BUNNY?
THEY OFTEN DIE,
YOU KNOW.











BECAUSE
WE'RE THE
KUROBAGI
CORPSE
DELIVERY
SERVICE.

AND
THAT'S
OUR
CLIENT
YOU'VE
GOT
THERE.



MR.
KARATSU
...?



UM...WELL,
AT LEAST, I
THINK IT IS...

Oh, man... talk
about loss of
face!



KARATSU
...?



WE'LL
SOON
SEE.











YAAAAA!!!



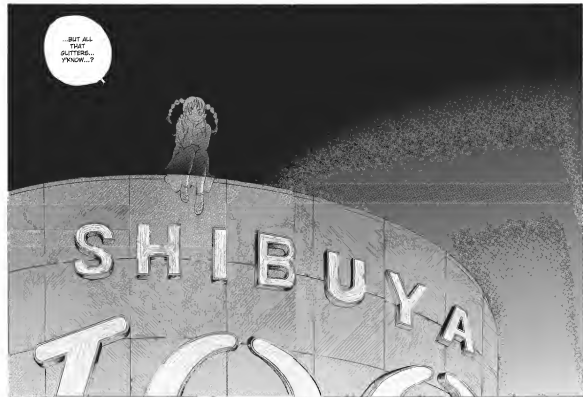






FROM UP HERE
YOU COULD
ALMOST THINK
IT WAS A
JEWELRY
BOX...

...BUT ALL
THAT
GLITTERS...
Y'KNOW...?



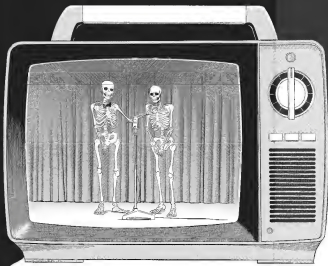




4th delivery

空の果てに腰かけて

i'm sittin' on the edge of skies











...WHAT
SAY YOU
STOP BY
MY C...ST?



HEY,
YOU
THERE



HEH
...?



!



From
To













BUT WHO'S GOING TO WANT TO BE THE NEXT PERSON TO LIVE IN A PLACE WHERE SOMEONE MET A TRAGIC DEATH? AND EVEN IF THE REALTOR TRIES TO PULL A FAST ONE AND NOT MENTION IT, IF THE RENTER EVER FINDS OUT, THE LEASE IS VOID, AND THEIR MONEY GETS REFUNDED.



SEE, THE LAW SAYS THAT REALTORS HAVE TO GIVE FULL DISCLOSURE ABOUT A PROPERTY IN WRITING.

BUT THEY'RE DEAD, AND FOR ME, IT'S A LIVING, YOU KNOW?



THAT'S ABOUT THE SIZE OF IT...

OH, HERE WE ARE.



HOW'S THAT?

THAT'S WHERE SOMEONE LIKE ME COMES IN...

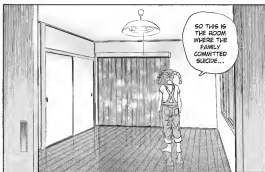


SO THEY GET YOU TO LIVE THERE FOR A WHILE, AND THEN THE NEXT RESIDENT ONLY HAS TO BE TOLD ABOUT YOU...?

OH...!



THE FULL-DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENT ONLY APPLIES TO THE PREVIOUS RESIDENT OF THE PROPERTY...

















WE KNOW
IT'S ONLY
A NUMBER.
BUT







5th delivery

堀までひとつとび
a single bound to the moat

I FOUND
THE
CORPSE!!







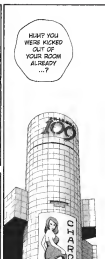
THEY JUST PAY
YOU A TOWN
AMOUNT, SO AS
SOON AS THEY
FIND SOMEONE
WHO CAN
AFFORD THE
MARKET
RENT...?

YEAH, THE
REALTOR
FOUND
A NEW
TENANT.

UH-HUH.
THIS JOB'S
PRETTY
MUCH
ALWAYS GOT
ME ON THE
MOVE.



UNTIL THEY
CALL ME
AGAIN, I
GUESS I'LL
GO LIVE IN A
NET CAFE
FOR A
WHILE...



HUH? YOU
WERE KICKED
OUT OF
YOUR ROOM
ALREADY
...?



WE SHOULD GET
SOME PLACE
THAT'S BIG, WITH
GOOD INSULATION
SO WE CAN
PRACTICE OUR
ROUTINES
WITHOUT
DISTURBING THE
NEIGHBORS...

LET'S
SEE
NOW...



WHY NOT
MOVE IN
WITH ME?

HUH?



OH, DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT IT. JUST LEAVE THAT PART TO ME. SO WILL YOU LIVE WITH ME OR WHAT?

WELL, YEAH, BUT...I'M BROKE, YOU KNOW...



...SEE THAT HIGH-RISE OVER THERE? BRAND NEW! IT'D BE PERFECT!



OF COURSE I AM! GIVE ME A WEEK OR TWO, AND I'LL CALL YOU WHEN WE'RE READY!

Y-YEAH...



DON'T YOU WANT TO LIVE WITH ME?

UM...BY LIVE TOGETHER, DO YOU MEAN... "TOGETHER"?

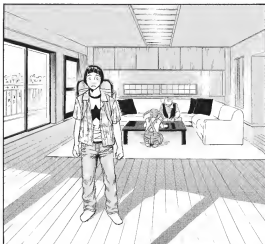


UM...OF COURSE I DO...

...I MEAN...

...ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?







SO WHAT
HAPPENED?
MAN, IF I COULD
AFFORD TO LIVE
IN A PLACE LIKE
THIS, I SURE
WOULDN'T KILL
MYSELF...



WOW...
SO
MUCH?

CONSIDERING
THIS PLACE
ORDINARILY
GOES FOR
400,000 YEN
A MONTH, IT
AIN'T SO
MUCH.



BUT THEY CLAIMED
THAT SOMEBODY
MUST HAVE, BECAUSE
THERE WAS THIS
GHOST THAT SHOWED
UP EVERY NIGHT
YELLING, "GET
OUT!"...JUST LIKE
A HORROR MOVIE.

NO, THEY
DIDN'T
DIE...



SOUNDS STUPID?
LANDLORDS
HAVE GOTTEN
SUED OVER NOT
MENTIONING
RUMORS ABOUT
GHOSTS...AND
LOST IN COURT,
TOO.



YEP.

YOU MEAN
YOU HAVE TO
DISCLOSE IT
EVEN IF A
PERSON
THOUGHT IT
WAS HAUNTED
...?



... BECAUSE
IF YOU DO,
THIS WHOLE
THING IS
GONNA BE
RATHER
POINTLESS.

SO MAKE
SURE YOU
DON'T
SEE ANY
GHOSTS
...

UM...
OHAY.



WELLLL,
NOT
EXACTLY...

OH, HERE.
I'LL SHOW
YOU MY
TRICK.



SEE?
I TOLD
YOU I'D
HANDLE IT.

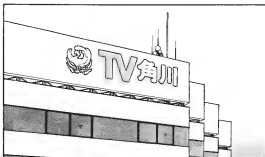


DON'T TELL
ME YOU
SNUCK IN AND
PRETENDED
TO BE A
GHOST...















THIS IS ABOUT
OUR *OTHER*
BUSINESS. YOU
KNOW BITTER
VALLEY TOWER,
RIGHT? I NEED
ONE OF THE
UNITS THERE,
QUICK.

BUT HOW
ARE WE
GONNA DO
THAT? THE
PLACE IS
BRAND
NEW...



YOU DID A
REALLY
GOOD SHOW
TODAY--

THIS
AIN'T
ABOUT
THE
SHOW.



YOU'LL DO IT
THE SAME WAY
YOU DID THAT
PENTHOUSE IN
ROPPONGI.
DRIVE THE
TENANT TO
SUICIDE.



O-O-KAY...
I'LL TAKE
CARE OF IT.



Y-YOU
WILL...?

SURE I
WILL. YOU
WANT IT,
DON'T
YOU?

THIS IS A FAVOR
TO ME, RIGHT?
I'LL ASK THE
PRODUCER TO
GET YOU A
REGULAR SPOT
ON A NEW
SHOW.



ALL I COULD DO
WAS PRETEND IT
WASN'T HAPPENING
TO ME...AND THEN
ONE DAY, I WASN'T
THERE WHEN IT
WAS HAPPENING.

WHEN I WAS
LITTLE,
PEOPLE USED
TO PICK ON
ME ALL THE
TIME.

YOU CAN
SEND OUT
YOUR
SPIRIT...?



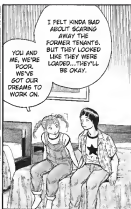
...SO WHEN
I SAW YOU
ON THE
STREET...

OH...



USUALLY
I'M A
PRETTY
FRIENDLY
GHOST,
Y'KNOW...?

YEP. SOMETIMES
I JUST DO IT
WHEN I'M BORED.
BUT THAT'S ALSO
HOW I GET ALL
MY CUSTOMERS
TO COME IN.











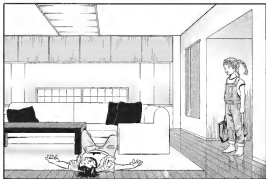
















**I FOUND
THE
CORPSE
!!**



**SHE'S
NOT
DEAD!**

**WASN'T SHE
WEARING A
COCKTAIL
DRESS
BEFORE...?**



**WELL, OKAY,
BUT IN MY
PROFESSIONAL
OPINION, THE
PROSPECTS FOR
IMPROVEMENT
ARE
POOR!**

**I'M TRYING
TO CONDUCT
AN EXAMI-
NATION OF
A PATIENT
HERE, IF YOU
DON'T MIND!**

**HEH? WELL,
LOOK, DOC, YOU
MAY BE THE
EXPERT ON
CRIMES, BUT
I'M THE EXPERT
ON CORPSES.
AND I'M TELLING
YOU...**



YOU DO REALIZE THAT THIS IS A CLINIC. YOU CAN'T JUST WAIT IN HERE WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT...

WHEN HAVE WE EVER MADE AN APPOINTMENT?



THAT GIRL SEEMS TO MAKE NUMATA'S PENDULUM REACT...

...AND WE'D LIKE TO KNOW WHY THAT'S HAPPENING.



SOMEONE MURDERED HER BOYFRIEND THE OTHER DAY, AND THE SHOCK MADE HER COMATOSE. NO, I SHOULDN'T SAY THAT... PHYSICALLY, IT'S JUST LIKE NORMAL SLEEP.

I'M NENE'S ONLY DOCTOR ON RECORD IN TOKYO, SO THEY BROUGHT HER HERE. I'D BEEN SEEING HER FOR A WHILE...BUT SHE WASN'T MAKING MUCH PROGRESS.



...



ME?

...ALL RIGHT, ACTUALLY, MAYBE YOU COULD COME IN HANDY ON THIS CASE.



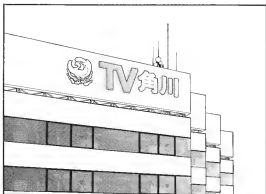




















AND
I'M NO.1

HI THERE!
WE'RE
STRAWBERRY
PIE! I'M
NENE...!



...I'M...
YU...YA...

SO HOW
ARE YOU
FEELING
TODAY...?



HUH...
ZOMBIE
COMEDY...
INTERESTING
...THE KIDS
ARE INTO
THAT...

...GOOD
MAKEUP
SKILLS.











**STAY
WITH ME!
PLEASE!**



NE NE
WE WERE
GO GO

WE RE NT
WE ?



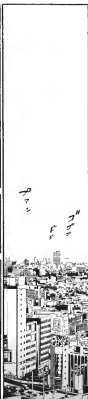
**NO,
ITAYADO-KUN!
DON'T GO
NOW...!**



...



**ITAYADO-
KUN...!**





SO I DID,
AND THEN
WHAT?
NOTHING.

*It's not my
fault! It
was the
fabric
softener!*

Ah ha
ha ha
ha!



SO
YOU'RE
TELLING
ME...



WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT? I'M
SO NICE
TO YOU!

*She
treated
me like
I'm her
puppet!*

HE WAS ALL,
LIKE, "BABY,
HUSH ME
DOWN---THAT'LL
REALLY GET ME
IN THE MOOD!"



SEEMS LIKE
A HAPPY
ENDING. I
MEAN, THEY
WANTED TO
BE TOGETHER
ON STAGE,
RIGHT...?



YEAH,
THAT'S
RIGHT.

...HIS SOUL
ENDED UP
IN NENE'S
PUPPET...?



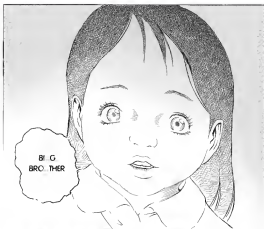


墨絵の国へ

to the land of ink paintings

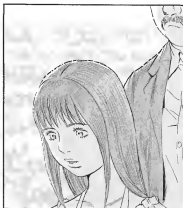














OH, IT'S
JUST
NUMATA...







I CAN'T
EVER
FORGET
THAT
NIGHT...

...AMIDST
THE CONSTANT
BARRAGE OF THE
FIRESOMES...
I FLED WITH MY
SISTER ON MY
BACK...



Don't
worry... we'll
be safe over
there!

I'm
scared,
big
brother!



Big
brother...
my doll...!

ALRIGHT







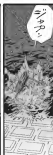
MY SISTER HAD
STAYED RIGHT
WHERE I HAD
TOLD HER TO...
AND NOW THIS
WAS ALL I HAD
LEFT OF HER.











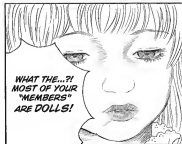
















WHAT'S HIS ADDRESS?
DO YOU
KNOW WHERE
THE DUDE
HANGS OUT?
WHERE HE
LIVES...?

NO, I
MEAN I'M
TRYING
TO FIND
HIM!



WELL, OF COURSE
WE KNOW HIM! HE WAS
THE FIRST DOLL MAKER
TO COMBINE A SILICONE
EXTERIOR WITH AN
ARTICULATED FRAME.
MARIA TYPE ZERO WAS
HIS PROTOTYPE
CONCEPT...



...IT
SPORK...?

LIKE I
SAID, IT
SOUNDS
CRAZY...



W-WELL...ACT
THAT'S WHY MARIA
IS SO RARE! HE
HASN'T BEEN IN
BUSINESS FOR
YEARS...
NOBODY EVEN
KNOWS IF HE'S
STILL ALIVE...



WELL, YOU
PROBABLY WON'T
BELIEVE THIS...
BUT WE FOUND IT
IN THE RIVER, AND
IT SAT UP AND
ASKED US TO SAVE
THE OLD MAN.

...SAY, HOW
DID YOU
FIND HER,
ANYWAY...?







...SO
SUPPOSEDLY
MURIM WAS
MADE HERE,
RIGHT...?

YES... IF THE
INFORMATION
THE CLUB
HAD IS
CORRECT.

8th 81
タイムマシンにおねがい
time machine



YEAH. WHY
WAS THE DOOR
UNLOCKED?
AND SEE THOSE
FOOTPRINTS
IN THE DUST?
SOMEONE'S
BEEN HERE...

...WAIT A
MINUTE.



...KINDA
DESOLATE.
LOOKS LIKE
ANOTHER SMALL
BUSINESS THAT
COULDN'T RIDE
OUT THE
RECESSION.



WHEN YOU
STOP TO THINK
ABOUT IT, WE'RE
LUCKY WE
DON'T HAVE TO
PAY RENT ON
OUR OFFICE...



**AAAGH!
A SEVERED
HEAD!**



HELLO?
IS
ANYONE
HE--

!







...FIRST, TELL
ME HOW YOU
KNEW ABOUT
THIS PLACE.

THE...SHE,
UH, ASKED
US TO GO
LOOKING
FOR YOU.



SHE
ASKED
...?



OLD MAN!
WHO ARE
THESE
GUYS?
WHAT'S
GOING
ON?!



THEY'RE
FOREIGN
AGENTS. I
DIDN'T REALIZE
AT FIRST WHO
I WAS DEALING
WITH WHEN I
TOOK THE
COMMISSION,
BUT...

...THEY
NEED
THESE FOR
THE BODY
DOUBLES,
IT SEEMS.



WHAT'S
WITH THE
MEN IN
BLACK OVER
THERE? ARE
THEY DOOL-
CLOTHES?
TOO...?

...LOOK, OLD
MAN--AT THE
MOMENT, I
DON'T THINK
WE NEED
TO WORRY
ABOUT ANY!



WHAT
?!

WHEN HE
SUPPOSEDLY
REAPPEARS IN
PUBLIC...IT'LL
BE USING THE
MASKS I
CREATED.



COME TO
THINK OF IT,
DIDN'T THE
NEWS SAY
THAT GUY
WAS
SERIOUSLY
ILL...?

...BUT
THEY ALSO
CLAIMED
THAT HE
RECON-
SERED...

COULD
IT BE...



IP
+
+

THEY
WOULD...
THEY
WOULD,
LIL...



WAIT A MINUTE!
WHAT WOULD
PEOPLE DO TO
PROTECT SUCH
A SECRET...?

THEN
THE REAL
DICTATOR
HAS
ALREADY
...?



IP
+
+





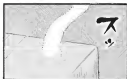






















NOT
WITHOUT
MIRIAM! HELP
ME CARRY
THEM OUT...



RIGHT!

THEY RAN
FOR IT!
LET'S GET
OUT OF
HERE!



B-BUT...

IF THEY CAN
WALK, FINE,
BUT THIS
PLACE IS
GOING TO
COLLAPSE ANY
MINUTE...!



OH,
SHIT--





DO...NT



MARIA...



W. ILL
ALWAYS BE
WATCHING
OVER
YOU BIG
BROTHER



WELL, WE
DID WHAT
THE CLIENT
ASKED...BUT
LOOK AT THE
OUTCOME.



BUT WHAT MORE
COULD WE HAVE
DONE...? LIKE YOU
SAID, THOSE GUYS
HAD GUNS. THIS IS
PROBABLY THE
BEST WE COULD
MANAGE.

SAD GUYS
GOT AWAY.
HIS PLACE
BURNED
UP.









STILL, IT'S A
PACKED HOUSE,
ISN'T IT? THE CLUB
SENT THE WORD
OUT, AND DOLL
AFICIONADOS FROM
ALL OVER THE
COUNTRY
SHOWED UP.



THE MAN JOES
THE CROWD
WITH THE
GLASSY-EYED
EXPRESSIONS

DID HE
REALLY SAY
*"ladies and
gentle-
man"...*?



I SUPPOSE
SO. AFTER
ALL, THAT
DOLL MADE A
HUMAN SPIRIT
COME TO REST
WITHIN IT...

MAKES YOU WONDER
HOW MANY PEOPLE
WOULD SHOW UP
FOR YOUR FUNERAL...
TO MOVE SO MANY
PEOPLE LIKE
THIS...MADA
TRULY WAS A
MASTERPIECE.



...AND...IT MIGHT
EVEN BE POSSIBLE
THAT THE SPIRIT
OF MY SISTER WAS
PRESENT AMONG
THOSE DOLLS...

THAT'S
WHAT I
BELIEVE...



THE SPIRIT OF
HIS SISTER
WANTED TO
STAY CLOSE TO
PROTECT HER
BROTHER SO
SHE ENTERED
THE DOLL...?

ISN'T
IT THE
OTHER
WAY
Around
...?

SASAKI-CHAN...
KARATE-KUN...
PLEASE GET
BACK HERE
SOON...!

...BECAUSE
AT THAT
MOMENT...
MARIA SAID
"WE"...

IT'S NOT
LIKE
THAT...!

YOU AND
YOUR
SISTER
COMPLEX

IT'S AN ANCIENT
FOLK BELIEF OF
JAPANESE KUNDO
YANAGITA CALLED
IT AMO NO DAREDARA,
"THE LITTLE-SISTER
FORCE," ALTHOUGH
THE SPIRITUAL
POWER COULD
COME FROM ANY
FEMALE RELATIVE...

ALL RIGHT,
ALL RIGHT,
ENOUGH
ALREADY!

the KUROSAKI corpse delivery service

黒鷲死体宅配便

elji otsuka 大塚英志 housui yamazaki 山崎峰水

designer **TINA ALESSI**

editor **CARL GUSTAV HORN**

editorial assistant **ANNIE GULLION**

publisher **MIKE RICHARDSON**

English-language version

produced by Dark Horse Comics

THE KUROSAKI CORPSE DELIVERY SERVICE VOL. 12

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DISJECTA MEMBRA

SOUND FX GLOSSARY AND NOTES ON KUROSAKI VOL. 12 BY TOSHIFUMI YOSHIDA

Introduction and additional comments by the editor

TO INCREASE YOUR ENJOYMENT of the distinctive Japanese visual style of this manga, we've included a guide to the sound effects (or "FX") used inside. It is suggested the reader not constantly consult this glossary as they read through, but regard it as supplemental information, in the manner of footnotes, or perhaps one of those nutritional supplements, the kind that's long and difficult to swallow. If you want to imagine it being read aloud by Osaka, after the manner of her lecture to Sakaki on hemorrhoids in episode five of *Azumanga Daioh*, please go right ahead. In either Yuki Matsukita or Kira Vincent-Davis's voice—I like them both.

Japanese, like English, did not independently invent its own writing system, but instead borrowed and modified the system used by the then-dominant cultural power in its part of the world. We still call the letters we use to write English today the "Roman" alphabet, for the simple reason that about 1,600 years ago, the earliest English speakers, living on the frontier of the Roman Empire, began to use the same letters the Romans used for their Latin language to write out English.

Around that very same time, on the other side of the planet, Japan, like England, was another example of an island civilization lying across the sea from a great empire—in this case, that of China. Likewise, the Japanese borrowed from the Chinese writing system, which then, as now, consisted of thousands of complex symbols—today in

China officially referred to in the Roman alphabet as *hanzi*, but which the Japanese pronounce as *kanji*. For example, all the Japanese characters you see on the front cover of *The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service*—the seven which make up the original title and the four each which make up the creators' names—are examples of *kanji*. Of course, all of them were *hanzi* first—although the Japanese did also invent some original *kanji* of their own, just as new *hanzi* have been created over the centuries as Chinese evolved.

Whereas the various dialects of Chinese are written entirely in *hanzi*, it is impractical to render the Japanese language entirely in them. To compare once more, English is a notoriously difficult language in which to spell properly, and this is in part because it uses an alphabet designed for another language, Latin, whose sounds are different (this is, of course, putting aside the fact the sounds of both languages experienced change over time). The challenges the Japanese faced in using the Chinese writing system for their own language were even greater, for whereas spoken English and Latin are at least from a common language family, spoken Japanese is unrelated to any of the various dialects of spoken Chinese. The complicated writing system the Japanese evolved represents an adjustment to these great differences.

When the Japanese borrowed *hanzi* to become *kanji*, what they were getting was a way to write out (remember, they already

had ways to say) their vocabulary. Nouns, verbs, many adjectives, the names of places and people—that's what kanji are used for, the fundamental data of the written language. The practical use and processing of that "data"—its grammar and pronunciation—is another matter entirely. Because spoken Japanese neither sounds nor functions like Chinese, the first work-around tried was a system called manyogana, where individual kanji were picked to represent certain syllables in Japanese. A similar method is still used in Chinese today to spell out foreign names; companies and individuals often try to choose hanzi for this purpose that have an auspicious, or at least not insulting, meaning. As you will also observe in *Kurosagi* and elsewhere, the meaning behind the characters that make up a personal name are an important literary element of Japanese as well.

The commentary in Katsuya Terada's *The Monkey King* (also available from Dark Horse, and also translated by Toshifumi Yoshida) notes the importance that not only Chinese, but also Indian culture had on Japan at this time in history—particularly, through Buddhism. Just as in Western history at this time, religious communities in Asia were associated with learning, as priests and monks were more likely to be literate than other groups in society. It is believed the northeast Indian Siddham script studied by Kukai (died 835 AD), founder of the Shingon sect of Japanese Buddhism, inspired him to create the solution for writing Japanese still used today. Kukai is credited with the idea of taking the manyogana and making shorthand versions of them—which are now known simply as kana. The improvement in efficiency was dramatic: a kanji previously used to represent a sound, which might have taken a dozen strokes to draw, was now replaced by a kana that took three or four.

Unlike the original kanji they were based on, the new kana had only a sound meaning. And unlike the thousands of kanji, there are only forty-six kana, which can be used to spell out any word in the Japanese language, including the many ordinarily written with kanji. (Japanese keyboards work on this principle.) The same set of forty-six kana is written two different ways depending on its intended user: cursive style, hiragana, and block style, katakana. Naturally, sound FX in manga are almost always written out using kana.

Kana works somewhat differently than the Roman alphabet. For example, while there are separate kana for each of the five vowels (the Japanese order is not A-E-I-O-U as in English, but A-I-U-E-O), there are, except for *n*, no separate kana for consonants (the middle *n* in the word *naga* illustrates this exception). Instead, kana work by grouping together consonants with vowels: for example, there are five kana for sounds starting with *k*, depending on which vowel follows it—in Japanese vowel order, they go KA, KI, KU, KE, KO. The next set of kana begins with *s* sounds, so SA, SHI, SU, SE, SO, and so on. You will observe this kind of consonant-vowel pattern in the FX listings for *Kurosagi* Vol. 12 below.

Katakana are generally used for manga sound FX, but on occasion hiragana are used instead. This is commonly done when the sound is one associated with a human body, but can be a subtler aesthetic choice by the artist as well. In *Kurosagi* Vol. 12 you can see an example on 54.1, with the ZUUN, as Yaichi manifests him(?)self, it is written ズウん. Note its more cursive appearance compared to other FX. If it had been written in katakana style, it would look like ズウン.

To see how to use this glossary, take an example from page 10: "10.2 FX: Kill—car

coming to a stop.” 10.2 means the FX is the one on page 10, in panel 2. Kill is the sound these kana—キーン—literally stand for; note that the small character “tsu” (ツ) at the end, commonly seen in manga FX, is not actually considered part of the sound itself, but serves to indicate that this is the kind of sound that stops suddenly. After the dash comes an explanation of what the sound represents (in some cases it will be less obvious than others). Note that in cases where there are two or more different sounds in a single panel, an extra number is used to differentiate them from right to left, or, in cases where right and left are less clear, in clockwise order.

The use of kana in these FX also illustrates another aspect of written Japanese—its flexible reading order. For example, the way you’re reading the pages and panels of this book in general—going from right to left, and from top to bottom—is similar to the order in which Japanese is also written in most forms of print: books, magazines, and newspapers. However, some of the FX in *Kurosagi* (and manga in general) read left to right. This kind of flexibility is also to be found on Japanese web pages, which usually also read left to right. In other words, Japanese doesn’t simply read “the other way” from English; the Japanese themselves are used to reading it in several different directions.

The explanation of what the sound represents may sometimes be surprising, but every culture “hears” sounds differently. Note that manga FX do not even necessarily represent literal sounds. Such “mimetic” words, which represent an imagined sound, or even a state of mind, are called *gōgō* in Japanese. Like the onomatopoeic *giseigo* (the words used to represent literal sounds—i.e., most FX in this glossary are classed as *giseigo*), they are also used in colloquial

speech and writing. A Japanese, for example, might say that something bounced by saying *PURIN*, or talk about eating by saying *MUGU MUGU*. It’s something like describing chatter in English by saying “yadda yadda yadda” instead.

One important last note: all these spelled-out kana vowels should be pronounced as they are in Japanese: *A* as *ah*, *I* as *ee*, *U* as *oo*, *E* as *eh*, and *O* as *oh*.

0.0 Thank you for waiting. I’m not sure where to start apologizing—so why not with the front cover? No sooner did you rip off the bestickered shrink wrap than your fingers sensed something was wrong. Something was different—namely, *Kurosagi* no longer has the rough cover stock it had for the first eleven volumes. This stock was originally introduced in an attempt to echo the brown wrapping-paper dust jacket used by designer Bunpei Yorifuji on the original editions of *Kurosagi*. Writer Eiji Ōtsuka is unusual among manga creators in using separate design studios (as opposed to the interior artist) to create the cover, and often the covers of his manga involve experimentation with the stock (fancy printer speak for the kind of paper) as well as the cover’s graphic design; for example, other manga to come out of his studio had covers with the texture of rice paper or linen. As mentioned, the original Japanese covers of *Kurosagi* used stock with the look and feel of brown wrapping paper. This is workable as a slip-cover (the standard kind of cover on Japanese paperbacks) but far too light to serve as the cover of an American-style paperback, so we

used the brown cardboard with which you've been familiar. The irony is that this "rough"-looking stock is actually rather expensive compared to the kind used in typical US editions of manga, and as Kurosagi regrettably doesn't sell very well, we decided this would be the least compromising place to cut costs. If you've run into some recent reprintings of earlier volumes of Kurosagi, you might have already seen that they use this new stock—perhaps we should have made the transition when the covers also switched to black with vol. 11, but here we are. And we are still here. As Joker said in *Full Metal Jacket*, germane to this series, "The dead know only one thing. It is better to be alive." The fact some volumes of Kurosagi have gone into multiple printings may seem to contradict the notion it has low sales, but it is much cheaper to reprint volumes that have already been produced, than it is to produce new ones. By the way, on the cover of the original Japanese vol. 12, right where "YOUR BODY IS THEIR BUSINESS!" is on the English edition, it says *Masaka no Harukado azooka shinkoo naka!*—"Hard to believe, but a Hollywood movie is in the planning!" I would make a 1941 reference at this point, but we are professionals, after all.

2.1 This time around, all the chapter titles in the volume are songs by the seventies rock group Sadistic Mika Band, whose name was in part a play on John Lennon and Yoko Ono's (were the editor a boomer instead of Gen-X, he would have just said "John and Yoko's") Plastic

Ono Band. The "Mika" in the name was their lead vocalist, Mika Fukui, various stories are given to explain the "Sadistic" part, but one is the manner in which she was said to wield her knife in the kitchen. Fukui was married to the band's rhythm guitarist and lead figure, Kazuhiko Kato, who had already achieved success in the late 1960s with the single "Kaettekita yopparai" ("I Only Live Twice"—a riff on the 1967 James Bond movie filmed in Japan, *You Only Live Twice*). Their first and second albums, the 1972 self-titled *Sadistic Mika Band* and 1974's critically acclaimed concept album *Black Ship* (the concept was the arrival to a largely isolated Japan in 1853 of Commodore Matthew Perry from the US in his fleet of "black ships," and the new ideas the visit helped spread) can be found together on one CD as a 1988 rerelease from the British label See For Miles. The fact it was issued on a UK label reflects Sadistic Mika Band's connections there; *Black Ship* was produced in London by Chris Thomas, at the time associated with Roxy Music, for whom Sadistic Mika Band would open on their 1975 tour. The band broke up after Mika and Kazuhiko divorced (she then married Thomas) but its members continued successful careers, including percussionist Yukihiro Takahashi, who became drummer and vocalist of electropop pioneers Yellow Magic Orchestra. Kazuhiko Kato would later make a famous contribution to anime as the composer of the eponymous "Ai Oboetemasuka" ("Do You Remember Love?"), sung by Lynn Minmay

- during the climactic battle in the 1984 *Macross* movie of the same name. On October 17, 2009, Kato's body was found hanging in a hotel bathroom in the resort city of Karuzawa, accompanied by two suicide notes; Kato, aged sixty-two, was said to have told friends, "I have nothing left that I want to do." The translator remarks that if the Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service really existed, this would have been a prime setup for one of their adventures.
- 5.2 The sign says "Jukaiyama Entrance." Jukaiyama, meaning "tree sea mountain," is a popular nickname for the vast Aokigahara Forest, the infamous real-life locale for suicide that's figured in *Kurosagi* since the very first story.
- 7.2 In the original Japanese, she said *u fu fu*, a sound that (at least in manga) is considered to be a sexy chuckle.
- 10.2 FX: KILL—car coming to a stop
- 10.3 FX: GACHA—door opening
- 15.1 FX: GOGOGO PUWAAAN DODO—traffic/construction noises
- 16.4 The last time we ran into Dr. Kayama (in vol. 6), Karatsu noted that she got to call Sasaki (her patient) by her first name, Ao, first-name intimacy being more rare in Japan than in the United States. Even men who have known each other for years and consider themselves friends might use last names; their familiarity will be shown by the fact they don't use *-san* at the end of it. Yata has apparently gotten to the point where he calls Makino by her first name (Kaiko), but none of the other characters address each other this way.
- 18.4 FX: DOSA—dropping garbage
- 19.3 Whereas you have to register with the government in the US to, for example, vote or get a driver's license, there is no general requirement to register your residence, as there is in certain countries, including Japan. The registration in Japan is often done at the ward level (for example, Shinjuku, whose municipal government Sasayama works for, is a ward).
- 20.6 FX/balloon: GASA—taking magazine out of bag
- 21.1 Note the square "QR code" ("quick response") in the center right of the cover. Despite the near-ubiquity of cell phones in America, it is estimated that only a third of American cell users have used a QR code yet, although numbers are increasing rapidly as US retailers such as Ralph Lauren and Starbucks use them in their own advertising campaigns. But the codes date back to 1994 in Japan, where they were invented by Denso Wave to track vehicle parts. By 1999, Kodakawa was using them on the spines of the original Japanese *tankobon* of the manga *The Ring* to help coordinate promotion with the movie. In Japan, where these are much more common, a person would be more likely to access them through their mobile phone than a webcam. The editor doesn't have a cell phone, reflecting that while it might be important to be able to get in touch with, say, a doctor or James Bond in a hurry, I can't really ever picture a dramatic shot of the president at his desk, the Cabinet gathered around him in silence . . . his head in his hands as he grapples with the weight of some terrible decision . . . then underlit as he slowly picks up

| | | | |
|------|--|--------|---|
| | the hotline to say "Get me the manga editor." | | |
| 21.3 | The phrase with ero ("erotic") suggests "otaku" is not confined to those lacking depth perception. During a recent appearance on the always-recommended Anime World Order podcast, Patrick Macias suggested that whatever scansness the word <i>otaku</i> might retain in Japan in 2012, it's among the older generation and not the young. Unfortunately, just as in America, in Japan, it is the older generation that votes, and not the young. | | |
| 22.2 | FX/balloon: PAN—flesh slapping together. "The slapping's getting louder/You don't want them to clown you/In this situation/What do you do?"—Digital Underground, "Freaks of the Industry." | 30.2 | FX: GASASA—spreading map open |
| | | 31.5 | FX/balloon: ZA—footstep |
| | | 33.5 | FX/balloon: GACHA—door opening |
| 23.3 | FX/balloon: GACHA—door opening | 34.1.1 | FX/balloon: GISHI—sound of squeaking bed springs |
| 24.2 | FX: BASA—sound of newspapers hitting table | 34.1.2 | FX/balloon: GISHI—sound of squeaking bed springs |
| | | 34.1.3 | FX/balloon: GISHI—sound of squeaking bed springs |
| 26.4 | FX/balloon: JAKKA JAN JARARA-RAN—ringtone | 34.3 | FX/balloon: PEKO—bowing sound |
| 27.1 | Dr. Kayama called her "Suzuku-san," but Karatsu uses "Yuka-san." Very smooth, that Karatsu. | 34.4 | FX/balloon: GII—door creaking closed |
| | | 35.6 | FX/balloon: NUPO—popping-out sound of Momoka getting up |
| 29.1 | In Japanese, <i>anemu</i> is a phrase that means "doesn't exist" or "not possible." Even though the entire name of the song is in Japanese, " <i>Anemu kyoowa-koku</i> ," the <i>anemu</i> part is written in katakana, as if it were trying to spell out the name of a foreign country. For example, the official name of France, <i>République française</i> , is written in Japanese in a similar way to this chapter title, as フランス共和国 (<i>Furansu kyoowa-koku</i>). Because Japanese uses four different scripts, having their origins in three different cultures (the Western Roman alphabet, the Chinese-derived | 37.3 | FX/balloon: SHUBA—clothes appearing |
| | | 38.1 | FX/balloons: PINPOON PINPOON PINPOON—doorbell sounds |
| | | 38.4 | FX: KACHARI—unlatching sound |
| | | 40.1 | FX: GATA—picking up laptop |
| | | 40.2 | FX: PARA—piece of paper fluttering out |
| | | 42.4 | FX: GOTO—putting down laptop |
| | | 42.5 | FX: GACHA—door opening |
| | | 44.1.1 | FX/balloon: CHIKO—hitting Enter key |
| | | 44.1.2 | FX/balloon: KAKO—hitting Enter key |
| | | 44.1.3 | FX/balloon: KACHI—hitting Enter key |
| | | 44.2 | FX: GYURURURU—sound of spinning |
| | | 44.3 | FX: GURUN—login sound for Second Life? |
| | | 46.5 | FX/balloon: SHUPAA—teleporting sound |

- 47.1.1 FX/balloon: SHUPAPA—teleporting sound
- 47.1.2 FX/balloon: SHUPAA—teleporting sound
- 47.1.3 FX/balloon: SHUPAPAPA—teleporting sound
- 47.4 FX/balloon: SHUPA—teleporting sound
- 48.1 FX/balloon: CHARAN—sound of pendulum dangling
- 48.5.1 FX/balloon: HYUN—sound of pendulum swinging
- 48.5.2 FX/balloon: HYUN—sound of pendulum swinging
- 49.1 FX/balloon: DADADADADA—running sound
- 50.1 FX: CHARA—sound of handcuffs rattling
- 51.1.1 FX/balloon: HYUN—sound of pendulum swinging
- 51.1.2 FX/balloon: HYUN—sound of pendulum swinging
- 53.6 FX: SU—placing hand on body
- 54.1 FX: ZUUN—Yaichi manifesting
- 54.2 FX: SU—Yaichi touching Kuro's hand
- 54.3 FX/balloon: PIKUN—dead body twitching
- 54.4.1 FX/balloon: BIKU—dead body twitching
- 54.4.2 FX/balloon: BIKUN—dead body twitching
- 54.5.1 FX/balloon: KAKO—sound of keys being typed
- 54.5.2 FX/balloon: KO—sound of keys being typed
- 54.5.3 FX/balloon: KAKO—sound of keys being typed
- 54.5.4 FX/balloon: KO—sound of keys being typed
- 56.3 On the sign, you can read "Internet café" in English, but above the English word "CHARGE" is the word "MANQA" in katakana (written here in all caps because another effect of using katakana to write Japanese

words is to suggest emphasis). This is, of course a reference to the magazine *Kurosagi* was running in at the time, the now-defunct *Comic Charge* (see note for 34.3 in vol. 10's *Objecta Memoria*). This is not the first time *Kurosagi* has referenced *Charge*, just as it has referenced its publisher Kadokawa on multiple occasions—I love how Eiji Otsuka has no compunctions about suggesting the very magazine his readers are holding is complicit in the terrible crimes depicted within. You can see this establishment does in fact have bookshelves full of manga against the far walls, and it seems not too dissimilar a place to the manga café that was the abode of the hapless part-timer in vol. 8's 2nd Delivery. It may also seem not too dissimilar to how their habitués feel about their prospects of employment.

60.4 The virtual farm the residents of Second Stage were laboring on might seem inspired by such online games as *Happy Farm*, *FarmVile*, or *Farm Town*, but this story, having begun in the spring of 2008 in *Comic Charge*, predates them all by several months.

60.5 Miss Momoka's business model is somewhat reminiscent of a lesser-known (and even creepier) work by the director of *The Manchurian Candidate*, John Frankenheimer's 1966 film *Seconds*, which starred Rock Hudson as a successful businessman who (semi)willingly goes along with a sinister company's offer to fake his death and create a new identity through plastic surgery and reeducation. Rock Hudson, known as a handsome leading man in

- romantic comedies of the 1950s and 60s, kept his homosexuality secret for the sake of his career, and it remained unknown to the general public until his death from AIDS in 1985—perhaps understandably, some critics have re-viewed Hudson's performance in *Seconds* in this light
- 61.1 FX: GORORO—sound of office chair casters rolling
- 61.3 Dr. Evil, of course, does the smile with the little finger to show how pleased he is with an evil plan, but long before that, sinister and haughty women in manga did it to accompany an open-mouthed laugh (usually an *oh ho ho ha!* although in the original, Momoka did an *ah ha ha ha!*) This is to show one's refinement, a variation of the gesture traditionally associated with "proper" feminine manners in Japan (and elsewhere) of covering one's mouth to screen sudden changes of expression, such as laughing, shock, or yawning. The editor, by the way, would like to see a gender-neutral revival of the practice for yawning
- 61.4 A soapland, in its various incarnations, has for decades been the Japanese equivalent of a "massage parlor," only rather than receive a therapeutic massage, you receive a therapeutic washing. So if there is a place in your town offering "Oriental massage," but it turns out they only use a thin folding mat and oil, complain that you have received a mere *Orientalist* massage.
- 62.2 FX/balloon: SHA—taking out knife
- 62.4 FX/balloon: BUTSU—piercing skin
- 62.5.1 FX/balloon: ZAKU—cutting sound
- 62.5.2 FX/balloon: ZAKU—cutting sound
- 63.1.1 FX/balloon: JI—cutting sound
- 63.1.2 FX/balloon: JI—cutting sound
- 63.1.3 FX/balloon: BARI—ripping skin off
- 63.1.4 FX/balloon: BI—ripping skin off
- 63.1.5 FX/balloon: BI—ripping skin off
- 64.1 FX: PECHA—wet slapping sound
- 65.3 FX/balloon: KON KON—knock knock
- 66.1 FX: BAAAN—sound of the door slamming open
- 67.4 FX: \$U—placing hand on floor
- 68.2 FX/balloon: PIKU—twitch
- 68.3.1 FX/balloon: KATA—rattling in chair
- 68.3.2 FX/balloon: KATA—rattling in chair
- 68.3.3 FX/balloon: GATAN—rattling in chair
- 68.5.1 FX/balloon: GATA—thrashing in chair
- 68.5.2 FX/balloon: GATAN—thrashing in chair
- 68.5.3 FX/balloon: GATAN—thrashing in chair
- 69.1 FX: GATAAAN—chair falling over
- 69.2 FX: PETA PETARI—slow footsteps
- 69.3 FX: TATATA DADADA—faster and faster running sounds
- 75.1 Just as Western artists might, it's not uncommon for manga artists to go back and make changes when their work is collected as a graphic novel (*tankobon*). Sometimes this is for reasons of controversy, but many times it's simply because, on second thought (and away from deadline pressure to turn it in) they wanted to do a scene differently, or perhaps add a bit, since in the *tankobon* they don't have to worry about taking page count needed for the other stories in the magazine. As you can see, in the *tankobon*, there are three pages prior to page 78. But when this story originally ran in *Comic Charge*, there was only one page prior to it. The double-page spread on pages 76–77 didn't appear at all, and Nene's monologue from pages 75 and 77 of the *tankobon* appeared in just that one single page. Moreover,

that single page wasn't the same as the one you see on page 75, it was three panels instead of two, starting with a close-up on Nene's eye, then an overhead shot of the city streets, then a shot of Nene perched on the rooftop—all done with different drawings.

78.1

The iconic 109 is a ten-story (eight above ground, two below) shopping mall in Tokyo's Shibuya ward; it has long been a signature destination for young women's fashion in Japan (but by no means the only place; there are, of course, also street and club fashion boutiques that couldn't afford the rents at 109, or wouldn't fit in there in the first place). According to the *Japan Times*, in 2008 its 120 stores racked up a staggering 28 billion yen in combined sales. 109 is credited by the *Times* with constant adjustment to changing styles, with almost a third of the stores either being remodeled or changing tenants each year, beginning in the 1990s, fashion magazines began to make stars of the store staff themselves, as so-called "charisma clerks" (a notion which brings to mind the bizarre fact that Moyoco Anno did a partial manga adaptation of *Chasing Amy*) and fashion leaders in their own right. You can find their English page at 109guide.com/top_f.html, although Shibuya 109 would like to remind foreigners that there is no bargaining, and you are not allowed to try on tops. My guess is that the first restriction is aimed at Chinese tourists, and the second at Americans.

80–81: Note that this is the same model TV set the KCDS has in their clubroom; its rotary dial and carrying handle bear mute witness to their poverty.

82.2

The sign says "Dorotabo Realtors," a play on *dorobo*, "thief." If this were Dropsie Avenue, someone would be telling Izzy Cash, "Ganef!" In Bob Andelman's biography of Will Eisner, *A Spirited Life*, a story is told about Eisner's visit to Japan in 1960 for research—not on Japan, per se, but on the needs of the US military forces in Asia; this was during Eisner's long tenure producing a comics feature on contract to the army for *PS: The Preventive Maintenance Monthly*. Not in Andelman's book (but what biography can cover everything? Well, maybe S. T. Joshi's *I Am Providence*) is a trip Eisner took to Japan decades later, in 1994, to attend a forum that brought Japanese and American comics creators together; he was accompanied in the US contingent by Wendy Pini and Brian Stelfreeze. Ghost in the Shell's translator, Frederik L. Schodt, who interpreted for Eisner on that occasion, relates the encounter in his classic survey of the manga industry at its high tide, *Dreamland Japan* (much of the detail omitted there for space was included in Schodt's article in the January 1995 issue of *Animerica*). Richard Pini has remarked that among the mangaka they met were Buichi Terasawa, Tetsuya Chiba, Yumiko Igarashi, Shotaro Ishinomori, and Monkey Punch and Fujiko Fujio (A). Looking at these names in retrospect, there is the impression of this 1994 meeting as having been with the "elders" of the industry, those who made their reputation in the 1950s and seventies, rather than those who had become famous in the 1980s or the up-and-comers of the early

- nineties; imagine, for example, them meeting an alternate group that would have been composed of people like Rumiko Takahashi, Katsuhiko Otomo, Akira Toriyama, Tetsuya Egawa, Tsukasa Hojo, and Kaiji Kawaguchi. I bring it up out of a curiosity as to what extent the Japanese hosts were interested in contacts between the contemporary industry and American creators. I wonder if there wasn't a generation gap that worked in two respects: one, the long-established creators were those who had the actual time and leisure to take an interest in foreign comics; two, those creators came of age in an era when the "success gap" between manga and American comics had not been nearly so wide, and thus may have had more respect for the latter. For example, in 1974, *Mad* magazine (which had such an influence on *Monkey Punch*) had a higher circulation in the US than *Shonen Jump* did in Japan, but by the time of the 1994 visit, *Shonen Jump*'s circulation in Japan was twelve times that of *Mad* in the US.
- 82.3** For more on the chop, or *jitsuin*, please see the note for 71.3 in vol. 2's *Disjuncta Membra*.
- 82.5** FX: **SHA SHA**—writing sound. The male protagonist in this story's name, Shakuya Itayado, is another joke, *shakuya*, when written with different kanji, means "a rented house"; *itayado* could mean "a shingle-roofed dwelling."
- 84.1.1** FX/balloon: **GACHA**—backpack rattling
- 84.1.2** FX/balloon: **KACHA**—backpack rattling
- 85.4** FX: **GOSHI GOSHI**—rubbing eyes
- 87.2** FX: **FUNYA MUNYA**—sleepy sounds
- 88.2** The first of the two kanji, *sara*, used to spell *Sarada*, means "plate" or "dish," and *sarada*, when spelled in katakana, also means "saled." Furthermore, the kang *sara* and katakana *sarada* are both used in the phrase *sarada hitosara*, "one plate of saled." Plate . . . shrimp . . . plate of shrimp
- 88.1** Itayado's sweeping pose with raised palm is a classic "Enough already!" gesture in double-act Japanese comedy
- 90.1** See the note for 122.3 in vol. 5's *Disjuncta Membra* for a quick refresher on the hostess club. That note mentioned that it's at the discretion of the client to try to convince the host or hostess (or vice versa) to hook up later on. Nene uses the standard phrase for this, literally asking if he wanted to go on an *afutaa*, an "after."
- 95.1** FX: **GWOOOO DODO PU-WAAAAA**—traffic and construction sounds
- 98.5** FX: **GWOOOO**—car sound
- 99.6.1** FX: **KIIRII**—brakes squealing
- 99.6.2** FX/black: **DOKA**—face hitting dash
- 100.1** FX: **CHIKA CHIKA**—hazard lights flashing
- 100.3** FX: **HYUN HYUN HYUN**—pendulum swinging
- 103.1** FX: **CHARARA CHARAAN**—ringtone
- 107.3** "Bitter Valley" is the literal meaning of Shibuya, from the ward's original status as a clump of villages in a valley formed by the merger of two small rivers, located about four km east-southeast of the walls of Edo Castle (today the site of the Imperial Palace) during the Tokugawa era of 1603–1868. It's a reminder that districts that are today known for being

parts of great cities often began outside of them; for example, during much the same period in history, Greenwich Village was not a neighborhood of New York, but, as its name implies, an independent town about as far from New York City proper (which in the eighteenth century occupied only lower Manhattan) as Shibuya was from Edo Castle. Edo is in fact the traditional name of Tokyo, and some hint of the city's nathan roots is seen in the fact Edo means "estuary." The name is still in use in such expressions as *Edokko*, "child of Edo," said of one whose family has resided in Tokyo for some time—at a minimum, back to one's grandparents. The idea that a large number of the residents in Tokyo are actually from somewhere else well predates the modern era—under Tokugawa rule, the famous *sankin kotai* ("alternating attendance") system required the vassal lords of the shogun, no matter from what distant part of Japan they hailed, to spend every other year (and being noblemen, accompanied by a retinue) in Edo. The system, which was designed in part to drain resources provincial lords might have otherwise used to build up a power base, also filled the city with an ever-fresh supply of country-ass hicks who may have carried two swords, but still left with their pockets emptied by the crafty commoner *Edokko*.

108.1 FX/balloon:JI—zipping up bag

108.6 This is, of course, not the first time the idea has come up in *Kurosagi* that realtors might have trouble renting a place where the previous occupant had met a tragic end; this

was how Numata negotiated his price down in vol. 6's story that introduced the *Shirosagi Corpse Cleaning Service* (who will return in the next volume, by the way). This motif has occurred in other manga as well, in *Excel Saga* Vol. 20, a realtor attempts to get around the disclosure laws via strained euphemisms, saying that previous suicidal tenants "failed to achieve takeoff from the rafting," or "arranged a self-suspension of questionable safety."

109.2 FX: BATAN—door closing

110.1 FX: DOFU—falling onto the bed

113.1 We return to the TV Kadokawa building seen in vol. 9's 2nd Delivery—once again, *Kurosagi*'s original publisher is mixed up in this business. Note that in 115.6, Sarada's henchman/understudy Kobayashi, AKA Duke Kerekero (named, of course, for the sound a frog makes in Japanese, as emblazoned on his T-shirt) is reading *Shonen Ace* (see note for 153.1, below).

113.4 Sarada does not have the kind of appearance that typically has a -*chan* appended to it in manga, but Fujita's use of it here reflects what might be called showbiz talk, as in "Sarada, baby!"

114.2 Fujita's gesture is the one used by Japanese men to indicate they're talking about a woman in their life.

115.2 FX: PON—tapping with a rolled-up script

116.1 FX: BA—pulling close

116.4 Although Japanese has its own native words for "regular" when used as an adjective, when used as a noun, as in "make you a regular," they are more likely to use the English loanword *regyuraa*, as is used here. This was apparently first used

in Japan to describe sports players in a starting lineup.

118.7 FX: JYARI—footstep in gravel

119.2 FX: WEEEN—automatic doors opening

119.5 FX: NIMAA—smack

120.4 FX: PINPOON—doorbell

120.5 FX: KACHA—door opening

120.6 FX: PA PA—brushing off leaves. Just as Itayado and Matsumoto refer to Sarada as “Sarada-shishoo” (“Master Sarada”—the same “master” as Numata used to address Master Azuma in vol. 10), this use of “brother” (Itayado greets Matsumoto as “Matsumoto-niisan,” as his elder brother) is traditional for two apprentices under the same master. If you go back to the note for 165.4, it suggests that shishoo implies a venerable craft. The example given there was calligraphy, but there are comedy traditions in Japan that are centuries old, such as *rakugo*; see note for 151.3 below.

121.1.1 FX/top: KOPOPO—iced coffee burping out of carton

121.1.2 FX/bottom: KARON—sound of clinking ice

122.5 FX: BASHU—sound of nail gun firing

123.1 FX: BASHU BASHU BASHU—getting nailed

123.2 FX: DO—thump

123.4 FX: BATAN—closing door

123.5 FX: TATATA—running sound

123.6 FX: ZA GASA—climbing into tree through the leaves. The translator noticed (as the editor did not) that Matsumoto was brushing off leaves in 120.6, suggesting that he’s leaving the scene of the crime the way he entered . . . climbing a tree to gain access to the emergency-exit stairwell, presumably to avoid being placed by witnesses or security

cameras as having ever entered the building. Judging by 128.1, it looks like he took the mug he touched, as well.

124.2 FX: GASA—pushing through leaves

124.3.1 FX/top: ZA—jumping out of leaves

124.3.2 FX/bottom: DA—landing sound

125.1 This sort of murder is what happens in a culture where you’re not allowed to kill people with firearms, the way Jesus intended: it’s like the bizarries that come of not being able to show genitals.

125.1.1 FX/top: BURORORO—car idling

125.1.2 FX/bottom: KI—braking sound

126.2 FX: BATAN—car door closing

126.3.1 FX: PINPOON PINPOON—doorbell

126.3.2 FX: PINPOON—doorbell

126.5 FX: KASHO—sound of card key being slid

127.1 FX: KACHA—sound of door latching closed

127.4 FX: PACHI—click

127.5 FX: PA PA—fluorescent lights coming on

128.4 FX: DOTAN—thud

128.5 FX: PEEPOO PEEPOO—ambulance sound

129.3 FX: BATAN—door closing

130.1 FX: HYUN HYUN—pendulum swinging

132.1 The idea that the regular experience of depersonalization is a mental disorder has serious implications for those who believe in a nonmaterial dimension to individual consciousness. Is this enlightenment diagnosed as a disease, or is it a disease that gives a false sense of enlightenment? The late Suzanne Segal attempted to grapple with these questions in her 1996 book *Collision with the Infinite*, which reflected on depersonalization disorder from both a psychiatric and a Buddhist perspective.

- 132.5 Ironically, Kereellis is deadpanning via a Kirk quote rather than Spock. Kereellis usually never misses the chance to suggest aliens' superiority to *Homo sapiens*, although his penchant for doing so with fictional aliens keeps the glimmer of suspicion alive that Yata is nothing more than an insane fanboy ventriloquist. Or perhaps it's just that since his host is such a big sci-fi fan, it influences the way Kereellis expresses itself? Or perhaps I'm overthinking it? No. Never in *Disjecta Membra*.
- 134.2.1 FX/white: KA KA—footsteps
- 134.2.2 FX/black: KIN—metal tip of cane striking floor
- 135.5 FX: KACHA—door opening
- 138.2 Ecöthric, although not an actual scientific term, refers to a postulated earliest period of human culture preceding the Lower Paleolithic. This would be somewhat meaningless in archaeology, where the Paleolithic is held to have begun with the advent of the genus *Homo*; i.e., humans—hence there would be no period of human culture before that. It seems to be used here in the sense of auditioning new comedians at the earliest stage of their careers.
- 140.5 FX: KATA—rattling chair
- 141.2 FX: DOSA—thud
- 141.3 FX: JIJUJII—zipper opening
- 141.6 FX: GATAN—falling down and knocking something over
- 143.1 FX: YURA YURA—unsteadily rocking back and forth
- 144.4 FX: GU—gripping nail
- 144.5 FX: GUGU—pulling on nail
- 144.6 FX: NUPO—nail coming out of flesh
- 146–147.1 FX: GYAAAAAAAA—scream
- 146–147.4 FX: GATAAAN—body crumpling to floor
- 149.1 FX: GOGO DODO PUWAAN—construction and traffic noises
- 149.3 The signs say "Strawberry Pie—One-Man Show". Nene, of course, named her act after her old club
- 149.4 FX: DO—crowd bursting out in laughter
- 150.1 I guess we were each waiting for the other to say the name "Yotsuba." Well, I'm not saying she'll turn out this way, but on the other hand I wouldn't rule it out entirely
- 151.3 In the original Japanese, they talked about Strawberry Pie's prospects of winning the M-1 Grand Prix, an annual *manzai* (see vol. 7's *Disjecta Membra*, note for 68.2) contest sponsored by car-parts retailer Autobacs with a ten-million-yen first prize. Since *manzai* is a double act, Numata and Karatsu debated on whether the R-1 Grand Prix, which features *rakugo* (solo comedy where one person plays multiple characters) might not be more appropriate
- 153.1 It was with this chapter that *The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service*, after much bouncing around between different Kadokawa magazines, returned to its original (and current) home, *Shonen Ace*—home also of Dark Horse's *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The Shiny Kan Raising Project*, although in the words of the late John Leslie, "they're not very much alike."
- 154.4.1 FX/balloon: BO BO—sound of exhaust coming out
- 154.4.2 FX/balloon: BO—sound of exhaust coming out
- 154.5 FX: MMMM—sound of power window coming down
- 155.4 FX: SU—picking up puppet
- 155.7 FX: MUKU—sitting up

- 156.2 **FX:** BA—eyes snapping open
- 156.4 **FX:** GAGOGO GOGOGO—sound of train passing overhead
- 157.1 **FX:** GOTOTON GOTOTON—sound of train passing
- 157.5 This is not the first time Kereelis has gone on about the Akashic Records; please see the note for 101.5 in vol 9's *Dejecta Membra*.
- 158.1 **FX:** GACHA—door opening
- 159.4 Not long ago, a foreign licensing company brought some samples of merchandise into Dark Horse from *Heidi, a Girl of the Alps*, wishing to know if we would be interested in releasing goods based on this classic anime, directed by Studio Ghibli's Isao Takahata (perhaps anime's greatest director, when he feels like it, his longtime friend and collaborator Hayao Miyazaki described him in his must-read *Starting Point* as a "descendant of a giant sloth"). Unfortunately, the charming, modeling theme emitted by the *Heidi* notebook upon opening suggests the answer. "*A-bue-ji-to-di-ME-tú . . . que sonidos son los que-oi-go-ya . . .*" It wouldn't really find a market in North America, for *Heidi* was one of the many anime series of the past that Spanish-speaking anime fans got to enjoy, but never showed on English-language television. ("Never" is perhaps a dangerous word among anime fans, I'm always learning things about where and when anime showed back in the day from con panels like Dave Merrill's "Dave's Old School Classroom" or Mike Toole's "Dubs That Time Forgot.")
- 160.1 If you're wondering why Numata has suddenly switched sunglass styles, it's probably because a little time—we don't know how much—has

passed between 6th and 7th Delivery. There was also a hiatus for the Kurosagi manga itself in Japan during this time (see note for 153.1), 6th Delivery ran in the September 2, 2008, issue of *Comic Charge*, whereas 7th Delivery ran in the July 2009 issue of *Shonen Ace*. If these glasses don't do it for you, relax—he goes back to his classic shades midway through vol. 13.

160.3 **FX:** PITA—coming to a stop

160.4 **FX:** BA—dramatic pointing

162.1 The old man is likely referring to the great American firebombing raid on Tokyo the night of March 9–10, 1945, which killed 100,000 people. Mincing no words, commanding general Curtis LeMay said the dead were "scorched, boiled, and baked to death," and once remarked he believed that had Japan won the war, he would have been tried as a war criminal. John Dower, the great scholar of the propaganda aspects of the Pacific War whose *Embracing Defeat* won the Pulitzer Prize, discusses this in his recent, controversial comparison of WWII and the War on Terror, *Cultures of War*. Dower's aim is not so much to condemn LeMay as to point out that he, unlike many political and military leaders today, was willing to face up to the terrible reality of what he was doing, even as he believed it was the correct thing to do from a war-winning perspective. Dower also points out that, although Hiroshima made mass killing possible with a single bomb, the moral line to commit such killing had already been crossed with such acts as the Tokyo firebombing, which actually took more lives than the atom bomb at Nagasaki.

- 162.2 FX: DOOOOON—boom
- 162.4 FX/balloon: POTO—plop
- 163.2 FX: ZA ZA ZA—running in grass
- 163.4 FX: DWOOOOM—boom
- 164.1 FX: DOSA—dropping doll
- 164.2 FX: GOTOTON GOTOTON—train passing overhead
- 165.5 "Love doll" is pronounced *rabudoru* (in Japanese; hence Numata and Yata's confusion).
- 165.7 His comment is of course in reference to *Shonen Ace* magazine, which theoretically should have content suitable for boys, i.e., shonen. This is something of a gag by now, as *Shonen Ace* is also the magazine that serialized Otsuka's *MPD-Psycho*. I've been editing the omnibus of CLAMP's *Angelic Layer* recently, which itself ran in *Shonen Ace* at the same time as *MPD-Psycho*, and reflected on the fact the two titles were considered to have the same readership. The irony is also that *Angelic Layer* really is an old-fashioned shonen manga in mood—a story based around fighting tournaments where the protagonist is a scrappy, pure-hearted kid who fights hard but fair, and wants to make friends with rivals. "Dutch wife" (in Japanese, *Dacchi wifu*) is a term said to have its origins in the period of exclusion between 1641 and 1653 when the only foreigners allowed to legally trade (or even set foot near) the Japanese home islands were a small group of Dutch merchants, who even so weren't allowed to live on the mainland proper, but on a small (9,000 square feet, or about 836 square meters for those of you with guaranteed health care) artificial island in Nagasaki Bay called *Deshima*. Because the Dutch merchants there also weren't allowed to bring their wives to the trading post, it was assumed that together with the clocks, astrolabes, and telescopes they were bringing to Japan, they were relying on gadgets to fulfill less celestial needs as well. *Samurai Champloo*, of course, advanced another theory.
- 166.2 FX: ZASA—rustling bushes
- 167.4 FX: BA—grabbing arm
- 168.3 FX: GATA GATA GATA—wheelchair rattling down slope
- 168.4 FX/balloon: JAPUN—splash
- 169.3 FX: GIRORI—glaring eye sound
- 169.4 FX: GOGOKWOOO—sound of traffic up above
- 169.5 FX: HYUN HYUN—sound of pendulum swinging
- 171.2 You read that right, Sasaki and Karatsu have gone off to Okinawa together (in American terms, like taking a trip to Hawaii). More on this in vol. 13.
- 172.2 FX: BATAN—thump
- 173.4 FX: CHIRA CHIRA—glanding
- 175.1 *Otaku* not yet gone entirely blind will note besides Rei Ayanami on the far left, a doll of Yoko Littner from *Guren Lagann* on the right (and to the right of Mumume-tan in panel 2). Yoko's presence is intriguing, as she doesn't really seem to fit in with the otherwise wan, warfish, and *moé* dolls the club possesses. And it can't be the Dollie Dream version of Yoko, because she's only 58 cm tall. I didn't actually just write that, did I?
- 176.4 It has been suggested that this story about the S.S. has its origins in a prank research paper that was picked up as a real news article by several international papers in 2005. Part of Otsuka's joke here is that the

old man's account of his dead sister also recalls *Grave of the Fireflies* (which, like *Heidi*, Isao Takahata directed) and that the records of the Nazi love doll project were supposedly themselves destroyed during the notorious firebombing of Dresden. For more information, see the Slovenian arts site RE:aki's article "SS-XXX: Die Frau Helga" at www.re:aki.org/ssxxx.

179.1 FX: DO DO DO—sound of tugboat putting along

182.2 FX: SUPO—sliding mask off of post

182.4 The joke here is that Numata can't remember Kim Jong-il's name (he died just as this chapter was being lettered), despite the fact he's even more notorious a figure in Japan than in the US. On the other hand, this may also be related to the strangely coy practice in *Kurosagi* of not using actual Korean script (see note for 187.2 below) even when other cues strongly suggest—and by suggest, I mean proclaim it in a banshee screech—the characters are Korean. By contrast, when Chinese characters appeared in vol. 4, they spoke in actual Chinese. It doesn't seem to come from any anti-Korean bias on the part of the manga; in vol. 10 the North Korean refugees were portrayed sympathetically, whereas the murderous drug smuggler preying upon them was Japanese. My guess is that the practice reflects more a desire not to offend Koreans in Japan through not liberally using their language. This might be seen as simply offensive in another way (think of the long history in Western comics of Chinese or Japanese being portrayed as a random bunch of scratches),

but a symbolic fig leaf goes further in Japan than it does in the West—like the thin bar of white-out in a porno manga, it serves not so much to conceal as to satisfy propriety. Japan is still coming to terms with its Korean minority (and the larger idea that you can be Japanese and yet not of Japanese descent), a process that involves the legacy not only of racism and politics but the unresolved issues of the Korean War, including a sizeable faction of Korean residents (the *Chongryon*) who swear explicit allegiance to North Korea. Despite casual online racism expressed in Japan and by nationalist groups (but don't we have those things too in America?), things have changed somewhat in Japan; the much-reported 2005 manga *Hating the Korean Wave*, after all, was only an attempted backlash against the fact that Korean TV stars and singers have found popularity in Japan. The richest man in Japan is ethnically Korean: Masayoshi Son, the founder of the venture capital firm SoftBank (he went to UC Berkeley, by the way). The sublime pointlessness of worrying about Korean influence "impurifying" Japan is suggested by Emperor Akihito's remark during a 2001 visit to Korea that Japan's own ancient chronicle, the *Shoku Nihongi*, states that the mother of the eighth-century Emperor Kammu was of Korean descent, and thus, so also is the Japanese imperial line.

182.5 FX: PAPAA—lights coming on

183.2 FX: DOSASA—th-thud

183.4 FX: BATAN—door slamming

185.5 FX: BACHA BACHA—splashing gasoline

185.6.1 FX/balloon: BACHA—splash
 185.6.2 FX/balloon: BACHA—splash
 187.1 FX/balloon: GARAN—empty gas can hitting floor
 187.2 The thugs' speech is portrayed using the same kind of pseudo-Hangul script (i.e., Korean) that was used in vol. 10's story about illegal immigrants.
 187.3 FX/balloon: GIIII—door creaking open
 187.4 FX: KATA KATA KATA KATA—doll body rattling slightly
 187.5 FX: ZU ZUZU ZU—feet dragging across floor
 188.1 FX: ZUZUZU ZUZU—doll approaching slowly
 188.3 FX: PAAN PAAN—blam blam
 189.2 FX/balloon: KIN—opening Zippo lighter
 189.3 FX: SHIBO—sound of Zippo getting lit
 189.4.1 FX: KAN—lighter hitting floor
 189.4.2 FX: BO—gas igniting
 190.1 FX: GWOOOO—blazing flames
 191.2 FX/balloon: DO—body hitting floor
 191.4 FX: NUUUU—sound of the spirit coming out
 191.5 FX: FUWA—the spirit floating/splitting up
 192.2 FX: SU SU—sound of spirits passing into boxes
 192.3 FX: SU—sound of the spirit entering box
 192.4.1 FX/balloon: KATA KATA—boxes rattling
 192.4.2 FX/balloon: GO—something moving inside box
 192.4.3 FX/balloon: GATA—box moving
 192.6 FX: BA—arm coming out
 193.1 FX: GASA GOSO GASA BA GASA—dolls coming out of boxes
 194.3 FX/balloon: PARA—sound of ropes falling away
 194.5 FX: SUKU—standing up
 196.2 I think our British readers would agree that this story might have easily been

a "Jack Black and His Dog Silver" mystery. "So what happened to the evil foreigners, Jack?" "They fell into the grasp of the flaming sex dolls, Aunt Meg. The melting latex burned their features beyond recognition, and I helped PC Brown bury them in a lonely field."

196–197.4 FX/balloon: BURORORO—sound of car driving away

198.3 FX: GI GI—sound of roof straining

198.4 FX: BAKI GARA GARA—roof giving away and falling

198.6.1 FX: DO—stopping falling roof

198.6.2 FX/balloon: JYU—sound of silicone sizzling

200.1 FX: BWOON GOGON—burning/crumbling sound

202.4 FX: PACHI PACHI PACHI PACHI PACHI—clapping

204.2 In Japanese, *shitsukon*. You may sometimes get the impression the motif was cooked up by *otaku* in the cemetery of Prague, but bear in mind the Shinto creation myth that the islands of Japan themselves were the children of the sibling goddesses Izanagi and Izanami (to be fair, their relationship was more Shintaro Kago than Blow Dharma). No doubt the concept would have a larger place in Western culture, too, had Genesis commenced with the line "In the beginning, God and his little sister . . ." By the way, the editor recently had the chance at last to read an issue of the venerable British war comic series *Commando Comics*. I always knew from books like *Sgt. Fury* what WWII German soldiers said during moments of crisis—"Ach du feier!" "Himmel!"—but what did Japanese soldiers say? Thanks to *Commando*, I now know it was "By Shinto!"

204.3 The tales of old Japan collected by folklorist Kunio Yanagita (1875–1962) have of course figured as an inspiration to Kurosagi since vol. 1; if you'll recall, in vol. 6, Eiji Otsuka even made him into a sort of Edwardian detective character (that is, in the equivalent Japanese period—the last years of the Meiji era).

221 We leave you with our first-ever piece of Kurosagi fan art, by my co-worker Philip Simon, who edits Eiji Otsuka's *MPD-Psycho* as well as *Eden*, *Blade of the Immortal*, and many, many other manga. I told Philip that I was jealous of the beautiful pieces of fan art he was always getting for *Black*, so he said

he would help me out, and managed to produce this in only sixty seconds. I pointed out to him that Sasaki looks like the little chick that Foghorn Leghorn tried to babysit to win the heart of the Widow Pissy: "But you said you needed my love to keep you warm!" "Madam, I don't need your love. I've got, I say, I've got my bandages to keep me warm." But Philip pointed out that no one under the age of thirty-five is likely to understand what I just said, so that settled the matter. See you in vol. 13—or maybe someday even vol. 63, as Philip suggests . . . ?

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